

This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

3 3433 07480697 1

The New York Public Library
* * *
The Frank Harris Collection
From The Library of
Einar Lyngklip
1942



THE FUN OF BEING A FAT MAN

By William Johnston

THE MYSTERY IN THE RITSMORE

THE APARTMENT NEXT DOOR

THE HOUSE OF WHISPERS

LIMPY, THE BOY WHO FELT NEGLECTED

THE YELLOW LETTER

THE TRAGEDY AT THE BEACH CLUB

THE FUN OF BEING A FAT MAN

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R L



SHE KNOWS THAT FAT MEN ARE SAFE AND RELIABLE.

THE FUN OF BEING A FAT MAN

By

WILLIAM JOHNSTON

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY

HERB ROTH



BOSTON
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY
1922

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
198976B
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS
R 1942 L

Copyright, 1922,
BY LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY.

All rights reserved

Published September, 1922

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To All Fat Men,

Those substantial citizens, whose wives worry about their increasing weight, whose friends keep advising them to take up golf, who loathe spinach and love pie, who have never exercised and never will. But who nevertheless have managed to get a darned good time out of life and have made lots of friends while doing it, this book is cheerfully dedicated by its author,

William Johnston.

251 West 92nd Street,
New York City.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Happiness of Being Fat . .	13
II.	On the Advantage of Being Fat .	22
III.	About a Fat Man's Pleasures . .	39
IV.	About This Reducing Business .	52
V.	How to Get Fat	62
VI.	Admitting the Drawbacks . .	75

ILLUSTRATIONS

She Knows that Fat Men Are Safe and Reliable . . . . . *Frontispiece*

PAGE

You Became Known as "Jumbo" . . 15

You Would Know Instinctively I Wasn't a Burglar. There Are No Fat Burglars 25

Which of Your Aunts Was It You Liked Best? 31

There Are Always Obliging Bystanders Ready to Run Two Blocks to Recover a Fat Man's Hat 37

While They Perspiringly Climbed the Steep Path, I Sat in Comfort, Fishing 43

Every Fat Man Once in His Life Tries Getting into a Canoe — and Quits . 47

Each of Us Has an Aptitude for Certain Foods, and an Unpleasant Reaction toward Others 73

THE FUN OF BEING A FAT MAN

CHAPTER ONE

THE HAPPINESS OF BEING FAT

SUPPOSE you were — a fat man!

Suppose, as far back as your memory runs, you had always been fat. Suppose the photographic record of your life, from your first plump-cheeked baby picture in the old family album to the last two-dollar flashlight of the recent dinner you attended, showed you at each stage of your existence possessed of much greater weight and bulk than the rest of your acquaintances.

Even when you were in Second Grade, you recall that whenever they played

prisoner's base you were always caught because you were too fat to run as fast as the others. If the game was tag, you were always "it."

A little later on, when you were introduced to gymnastics, you found yourself hopelessly outclassed in chinning on the horizontal bar. The other youngsters of your age had only half as much weight to lift. Nor will you ever forget your embarrassment and annoyance the day the circus posters went up proclaiming "The largest elephant in captivity", and the nickname to which you had at last become accustomed, "Fatty", was forthwith and forever abandoned by your playmates, and you became known, to your great mortification as "Jumbo"— Jumbo Johnston.

Consider, too, how you must have felt, when, feeling that you were approaching manhood, you sat in the barber chair and read Puck and Judge and made the horrifying discovery that fully half the jokes and funny stories printed were about fat men.

As time went on and you grew older — old enough to have a girl, — when all the



YOU BECAME KNOWN AS "JUMBO."

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

money you could raise was spent in buying theater tickets for HER, you may recall how careful you were, weighing two hundred pounds, to select only romantic dramas and tragedies — never comedies or farces, for even at that early age you had discovered that on the stage there is but one idea of humor — to have something happen to a fat man, and you feared that seeing the spectacle SHE might laugh, and twit you on your weight.

Suppose, too, that having somehow managed to survive these tribulations of youth, you all your life long had been constantly confronted and affronted by articles in the magazines and newspapers, by advertisements, by personal unasked-for advice on "How to reduce." Suppose you had observed that not a single day of your life passes without some one — strangers as well as acquaintances — getting off jocular remarks about your weight, size, shape, and general appearance.

Oh, yes! All the world regards the fat man as a target. People assume that his proverbial good nature makes it safe for

them to make insulting remarks to him, whether they know him or not. Only the other day, in a crowded elevator, a man I never had seen before, a thin scrawny person with a hooked nose, tapped me playfully on the belt line and asked:

"Are you doing anything for it?"

"No," I smilingly answered; "but if you wish I can give you the address of a surgeon who has had wonderful success in straightening noses."

It was the offender that got angry, not I.

I have reached that philosophic period in life when one looks back over the years to take stock of things; and, reckoning everything up, as I have been doing, I have decided that, fat as I am, fat as I always have been, fat as I am likely to be to the end of the chapter, I have had a lot of fun — I have been far happier than any of the thin men I know.

What if, as I dignifiedly enter a subway car, some rude guard occasionally yells at me, "Hey, Fatty, get a move on!"

What if nearly every one who meets me speaks of me as "Big Bill?"

What if, on the street, my wife happening to address me jokingly as "darling," a newsboy promptly sets up a cry, "Hey, fellers, come and look at darling!"

What if, riding home from a wedding in high hat and cutaway on top of the bus, the seat being narrow and one half of me hanging over, at a quick turn, I am flung into the aisle, while the rest of the passengers shriek with laughter?

What if, when I go fishing and stand up to cast, my center of gravity makes such startling and unexpected shifts that I am spilled into the water occasionally? Being fat, I can't sink, and if the spectators enjoy it, let them.

What if, when I attempt to enter a taxicab, the driver has to get out of his seat and push from behind to get me through the narrow door?

What do all these things matter, when reckoning everything up, if I find my life has been and is a happy one? Perhaps, under these circumstances you would say to yourself, just as I have:

"It's time for the worm to turn. I'm

going to tell the truth about being fat. Just for once, I am going to put in their place all these miserable, envious, prevaricating thin people. What do they know, anyhow, about living, about happiness, about fun?"

High time for some fat man who is satisfied with his lot, who gets heaps of fun out of being fat, to come to the front for the fat. So let me say, with all the weight of my two hundred and fifty pounds — *I like being fat.* I am fat because I prefer to be fat. Any fat man can get thin if he wants to. It is not necessary to consult doctors, go in for exercises, take up health courses, study diet lists, or start playing golf. There are two simple rules that will make any fat man thin. Here they are:

1 Eat everything you don't like.

2 Do everything you don't want to do.

That's one great satisfaction every fat man has. He knows that he can always lose weight if he wants to. But nothing in the world can make a thin man fat. He can eat all kinds of cereals, drink six quarts of cream a day, sleep ten hours —

but if he has a thin disposition he will keep on being thin.

The truth is, fat isn't a matter of food or exercise at all. It's a matter of philosophy. Fat people are merely those who have learned to get the most out of life, who have discovered the things that really are worth while.

If I should try to sum up a fat man's philosophy of life — my own philosophy — I suspect it would be just a few aphorisms like these:

What happens doesn't matter. It's what you think about what happens that counts.

To-day's troubles are to-morrow's jokes, so let's laugh now.

Nothing can happen to me that hasn't happened to thousands of others, and if they could stand it, I can.

Worry doesn't get you anywhere; for the things you worry about never happen.

You can get anything you want out of life, if you want it hard enough.

The two things necessary for happiness are comfort and friends. Work brings comfort. Being friendly brings friends.

TH

CHAPTER TWO

ON THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING FAT

EACH word we use is a little crystal of history, a record of the past experience of the race, a summing up of what the centuries have taught. What are the synonyms of "fat"? Fertile — productive — lucrative — remunerative — profitable. Nothing there for a fat man to be ashamed of, is there? "Fat" is really in excellent standing in the language. When a printer gets a bit of easy type to set he calls it "a fat take." An actor pleased with his rôle announces that he had "a fat part." The Bible, too, stands right behind the corpulent with its approval. Whenever any of the old prophets wanted to make the Israelites behave they used to promise them "fat"; "the fat of the land," "fat harvests." "Fat" really was a fine word until the misguided apostles of this modern

doctrine of reducing succeeded in making it unpopular.

If, however, despite historical support, you still believe that fat people can't rejoice because they are fat, just stop to consider in how many ways we fat men put it all over the rest of the world, especially over the poor thin folks.

A fat man invariably has a good reputation. Suppose that you are awakened some night by a noise in your bedroom. The first terrorizing thought that comes to you is that a burglar has managed to effect an entrance. For a second or two you shrink under the covers. Then, mustering up all your courage, you peep out to make sure. Between you and the window in the dim light you see a human form — you discover ME.

Instantly you are bound to breathe a sigh of relief. You wouldn't care who I was, or how I got in, or what I was doing there. You would know instinctively I wasn't a burglar. Who ever heard of a fat man being a burglar? There *are* no fat burglars.

Or suppose some one in your office has been stealing. On whom would your suspicions most likely descend, — your fat employes or your thin ones? There is only one answer. When you finally called in a detective he automatically would leave all the fat men off his list of suspects. It is a ten-to-one shot that the first person he would begin to shadow would be a thin man with a worried look. Thieves always worry for fear of discovery and worry makes people thin, so fat men always are safe from suspicion. Ask any surety company or bonding company about it. They will tell you that the safest risk is a fat man. They know.

Only the other day a lecturer on character analysis, speaking to a business organization, had this to say about fat men:

"You will never find a fat man in the poorhouse. You will never find a fat man broke. More than that, you will never find a fat man working too hard, or discouraged."

Fat men always have nice jobs. Make a list of all the fat men you know and you'll



YOU WOULD KNOW INSTINCTIVELY I WASN'T A BURGLAR. THERE *ARE* NO FAT BURGLARS.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

discover that one hundred per cent. of them are holding down nice comfortable jobs — sitting jobs, of course — places sufficiently remunerative to supply them with the comforts of life. If you do not happen to know any fat men personally, take William H. Taft as an illustrious example. Study his career: He has had a lot of jobs, and being a corpulent person he always carefully has picked out places where he could do his work sitting down; little jobs like sitting in the Presidential chair, and resting on the soft cushions of the Supreme Court bench.

The truth is the nation's fat men are her backbone. Think how often you use the word "substantial citizen," and picture the mental image it conveys to you — a nice, comfortable, potbellied person, fairly well off. You'll never find a fat man a multimillionaire. Too much money brings worry, and fat men dodge worry. On the other hand you'll never find a fat man in poverty. Who ever heard of a fat beggar? Plenty — neither rich nor poor — is the fat man's motto.

Furthermore, every fat man has that which makes life most enjoyable, — friendship. The men, and the women, too, who are in the two-hundred-pound class always have hosts of good friends. It's become proverbial: "Everybody likes a fat man." Fat people never have enemies; or, if they do have, they never know it. Looking on life through roseate glasses, they take it for granted that every one else does the same. It is to the fat man that people instinctively turn when they're in trouble, when they're looking for sympathy. Fat men have so few troubles of their own they always have time for other people's troubles.

The fat ladies, too, have the most friends. Don't think for a moment, because you always hear them talking about trying to reduce and complaining how hard it is for them to find clothes to fit that these blessed stout forty-sixes aren't enjoying life. They can't help complaining a bit about their figures, for just now it is the Fashion to be slim, and even a fat lady likes to follow the fashions; but there are few of them

who ever do get thin. And remember, they know how to if they really want to. Life for them is too pleasant as it is. They enjoy good food. They like to sit down beside a box of candy with a novel at hand.

Fat women are always popular. Who among your wife's women friends are you always gladdest to see? Which ones among them do you always call by their pet names? The fat ones, every time; the "Dotties" and "Tinies." From childhood, if you stop to think about it, you always have liked fat women best. The youngsters who were blessed with a fat mother always had the happiest childhood. Which of your aunts was it you liked best? Fat Aunt Jennie, who was always bringing you candy — now, wasn't it?

Fat men and women are popular because they are inclined to be liberal; liberal in their thought, liberal in their opinions, liberal with their time, liberal with their money, liberal in regard to other people's shortcomings. Old King Solomon had them sized up right twenty-five hundred years ago. "The liberal soul shall be

made fat" was the way he put it, and it is just as true now as it was then. If you wish to ask a favor, inquire your way, seek a bit of advice, or need some one to tell your troubles to, don't you always apply first to a fat man?

That's part of the fun of being a fat man. A lot of people who are down on their luck somehow manage to reach my desk; and they keep coming, in spite of the fact that there are two things I seldom do — find any one a job, or lend any one money. There is much more pleasure for me and much more profit for the applicant in the solution I have worked out.

When you find a job for a man, I have discovered that he seldom keeps it. Generally in a month, or three months, or six months, he comes back again to see you, and another job has to be found for him. The thing I always try to do in such cases is to show the man how to find his own job. I talk with him long enough to discover what he likes to do, what he can do best, and then point out ways by which he might succeed in marketing his talents. Once a



WHICH OF YOUR AUNTS WAS IT YOU LIKED BEST?

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

young man learns how to get his own job, to sell himself, he doesn't need much looking after.

It's the same way, I've discovered, with loans. Borrowed money never lasts long. The young fellow who comes in to make a touch invariably comes back to make another, or else he crosses the street when he sees you coming — both of which proceedings are annoying, even to a fat man. I have discovered a way of handling such cases. If the fellow is really up against it, if, for instance, he has a wife and baby and they must have food, I come across, but I never make it as a loan. I say to him:

"I'll give you some money, but on one condition. You don't owe me a cent. You are not even to think of yourself as being in my debt. This is 'Pass-it-along-money.' You're going to get on your feet soon, and some day you're going to meet some one who needs ten dollars worse than you do. Slip him ten on the same condition that I'm giving you this."

I have had a lot of fun starting ten-dollar bills working in these pass-it-along

clubs, for every once in a while some young fellow comes in to tell me that he is on his feet and that he, in turn, has passed it along. I wouldn't be surprised if even a thin man could get some fun out of this sort of a club, if he was game to start one.

Yet, even if I seldom lend money, I get a lot of fun spending it. Like most fat men, I'm too busy accumulating comfort and happiness to bother much about hoarding up money. When I go into a crowded restaurant the head waiter always hurries to find me a table. He has seen fat customers before, and he knows that his good services will receive liberal recognition. On a rainy night a taxicab driver will pass by a whole horde of thin men, waving frantically at him, to get to where I am patiently waiting under an awning. He knows who'll take the best care of him.

Whenever I go into a living room, the hostess is always solicitous that I shall have the most comfortable chair, while she lets the thin men shift for themselves. It is mighty seldom you will see me at the

theater that I am not planted in the choice aisle seat; and if my hat blows off on a windy day, do you see me running after it? No, indeed! Somehow there are always obliging bystanders ready to run two blocks to recover a fat man's hat.

Look around you and see if it is not true that the best citizens are the fattest ones. You never see a fat citizen with a black eye. He is a peace-loving creature with a sense of humor.

The girl who picks out a fat bridegroom may have to stand some twitting from her friends, but if you hunt her up ten years later you will find that she has kept her looks. A fat husband, placid, good natured, liberal, is much easier to live with, day in and day out, than a thin, nervous, worried husband who plays golf for fear of losing his figure.

In travel, in work, in business, in everything, fat men have greater power of endurance than thin men. Fat is the reserve that nature puts by for men to draw on when they need it.

"But doesn't being so fat interfere with

your activity in business?" is another question people are always asking me.

Listen to the voice of the scientist on that subject:

"Nature compensates a stout man for his bodily unwieldiness by giving him a mind that is especially acute and energetic. The consequence is that with his optimism and his mental activity, provided his application be good, *the fat man is one of the most potent forces for beneficence that the world can possess.*"



THERE ARE ALWAYS OBLIGING BYSTANDERS READY TO RUN TWO BLOCKS TO RECOVER A FAT MAN'S HAT.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

CHAPTER THREE

ABOUT A FAT MAN'S PLEASURES

"BUT," some one protests, "doesn't being fat interfere with a lot of things you would like to do? How about traveling? Don't you experience a lot of discomfort?"

Not at all. I have done perhaps far more traveling than the average citizen, riding in all sorts of vehicles, in many parts of the world, and I never have been uncomfortable yet. It is true that the little Scandinavian pony that pulled me round over the mountains of Norway in a *stolljarre* had an unhappy look, but *I* enjoyed the experience. When I traveled all over New York city, three thousand feet in the air in a hydroplane, I was perfectly comfortable, even though the way I climbed from a bobbing launch into the hydroplane seat may not have been as graceful as the entrance of the rest of the party. When I cross the country to California, you'll find

me in a compartment or a drawing-room, not an upper berth; for, like all fat men, I don't look on money as a thing to be saved, but to be spent as a means of procuring comfort.

If I go abroad, before the liner is two days out I am on good terms with two thirds of the passengers. Somehow, a fat man is far easier to get acquainted with than a thin man. If he doesn't speak first to his fellow travelers, they just naturally up and speak to him. Let a thin man address a beautiful stranger and invite her to play shuffleboard, and she'll snub him promptly, suspecting that he is trying to flirt with her. But she'll accept a fat man's invitation every time. She knows, as everybody instinctively knows, that fat men are safe and reliable. So a fat man can say almost anything, to anybody, anywhere.

When I am traveling by train and go into the Pullman smoker I generally find there a lot of thin grouches sitting around in silence, looking suspiciously at each other, every mother's son of them lonesome as the dickens for some one to talk to

and wishing somebody would start something. Two minutes after I arrive everybody is trying to talk at once, all of them as chummy as brother Elks at the annual picnic.

Being fat keeps you from doing a lot of silly things when you are traveling. Once I recall — it was away up inside the Arctic Circle — most of the people in the party had been beguiled by the guides into climbing that bit of rock they call the North Cape, on the promise of a wonderful view of the Midnight Sun from the summit. While they perspiringly climbed the steep path I sat in comfort on the deck of the yacht, fishing, bringing up from the Arctic depths all sorts of strange and wonderful-looking fish I never had seen before. Presently, one by one, my fellow travelers came straggling back, breathless, tired, disappointed. By the time they had reached the top a fog had arisen, and there was nothing to see.

"I guess you were the most sensible one after all," they said, as they enviously inspected my catch.

Of course I was the most sensible! I'm a fat man.

In the fat man's philosophy nothing is worth doing that is apt to cause him any discomfort, so when he travels he escapes the silly traps that most people let themselves in for. As a matter of fact, when it comes to traveling the stout man outshines the thin man every time. Didn't Theodore Roosevelt, when he weighed over two hundred once upon a time, travel 13,383 miles through twenty-two States in a few weeks, delivering four hundred speeches, meeting three million people, and shaking hands with thousands of them, returning to Washington fatter than when he started out. If a thin man had tried to keep up with him, he would have been worn to a shadow and wouldn't have gotten over it for a year. Fat men have far greater powers of endurance. Fat is the reserve that Nature puts by for them to draw on.

Experience has taught me that not only in traveling, but in daily life, a fat man dodges many of the annoying things that



WHILE THEY PERSPIRINGLY CLIMBED THE STEEP PATH, I SAT IN COMFORT, FISHING.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

other people are always complaining about. Just now every one seems to be talking about how bad the movies are — "so stupid I just couldn't sit through it." I never have seen a boresome film. Most of the motion-picture theaters are built to squeeze as many persons as possible into a limited space and the seats are seldom designed to fit a fat man, so bad movies never bother me. I never go to them. I may miss the good movies, too, but there are compensations. A comfortable chair and a good book make up for a lot.

Nobody in the world has a better time than a fat man off on a holiday. Where other people get into wordy arguments with ticket agents, he grins and gets some other fellow's reservations. You never see a fat man struggling into the narrow confines of an upper berth. If there is a "lower" to be had he gets it, although more often you will find him spreading his bulk in the Pullman drawing-room. If on his holiday he happens to choose a lake resort, the pleasures of canoeing may be denied him. Every fat man once in his life tries getting

into a canoe — and quits. When you weigh over two hundred, your center of gravity has a way of shifting unexpectedly with disastrous results. But always there are flat-bottomed boats to fish from, and fat men all are fishermen.

"But," I hear some thin man say with a satisfied smile, "being fat must interfere a lot with some of your amusements. How about golf?"

I do not know how other fat men feel about golf, but to me it is not an amusement, but an annoyance. It is a game apparently played only by blatant egotists. I know nothing about the game. I never have had a golf club in my hand. All I know of it is that my golf-playing friends come to the luncheon table on Monday, monopolizing the conversation with tales monotonously the same. "I must tell you about a wonderful shot I made Saturday afternoon." Never yet have I heard a golf player tell about a wonderful shot some other fellow made. Most golf players in my opinion are bores, weak-minded creatures who, as some one aptly said,



EVERY FAT MAN ONCE IN HIS LIFE TRIES GETTING INTO A CANOE — AND QUITS.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

have so little energy that they have to lure themselves into walking by knocking a silly little white ball ahead of them. I'm glad I don't play golf. I might become even as they.

But even though a fat man may not know the difference between a putter and a fairway, even though he may go through life ignorant of the joys of canoeing, even though he can never experience the joys of climbing to some silly mountain top, or of making a home run on the baseball field, a hundred other pleasures are his.

A fat man with an imagination can read an account of some one else's adventures, getting all the thrills out of it that the other fellow had with none of the inconveniences. Nearly all fat men, you'll find, are great readers, but there are other amusements too.

Personally, I spend a good deal of my spare time playing auction bridge. It has many things to commend it as a pastime. Not only does it provide pleasant exercise for the mind, with the excitement and thrill afforded by the element of chance, but it

affords never-ending opportunities for amusing character-study. You never can really know your most intimate friend until a foolish bid of yours has resulted in his being set three hundred points in a doubled trump. Who are the ones you like best to play bridge with — the fat ones.

To a fat man the dinner table, too, is a never-ending source of entertainment. A meal of well-cooked viands, eaten in congenial company, deserves a high place in the scale of amusement. A man needs only to have a fat man's appetite to be a popular dinner guest. Nothing wins a hostess's approval more quickly than a fat man asking for a second helping of some dish made by her own special recipe. Even the servants like to see a fat man coming as a dinner guest.

With the society of congenial friends, with the assurance of a good dinner and a good appetite with which to eat it, with leisure for reading and bridge, with a taste for travel, and a fondness for fishing — the fat man stands ready to get the fullest enjoyment out of life, and most of them, I

think, govern themselves and their pleasures by that motto. I once saw carved above the door of the living room of that greatest of all feminine philosophers, Ellen Key, in her home in far-off Sweden, "Each Day is a Life."

Well might we fat men take it for our own — for that is the way we live, — enjoying each day as it comes along.

CHAPTER FOUR

ABOUT THIS REDUCING BUSINESS

How would you feel, if you were a fat man, and every day — frequently many times a day — people kept asking you impudent questions like this:

What are you doing to reduce?

Why don't you exercise more?

Have you tried dieting?

Have you read "*Eat and Grow Thin?*" I am going to send you a copy.

Did you ever try Fletcherizing your food?

Have you heard about the gland cure for reducing?

Why don't you take up golf?

Oftentimes you would be tempted to ask them where they got the mistaken idea that you want to reduce. It would be on the tip of your tongue to come back with some equally insulting questions about their baldness, and the state of their com-

plexion, and why didn't they get their noses straightened, but most probably, being a fat man, you would do just as I do. You would look placidly at the poor emaciated creatures who ask these silly questions and smile.

Every fat man has discovered for himself that all thin persons suffer from a fixed delusion. Each day they look at themselves admiringly in the mirror and fondly imagine that every one else in the world envies them their scrawny figures and would give anything to look like them.

The average adult male weighs — I haven't the statistics at hand but as I recall it — one hundred and forty-one pounds. It is the conceit of the Average Male, his fond belief that every one else in the world would like to weigh exactly one hundred and forty-one pounds too, that is responsible for this cult of reducing.

Yet despite the wide-spread propaganda for reducing that is going on, I personally have never yet been persuaded that it pays a fat man to reduce. Even though as I prepare this book for the press I am laid

low by an attack of appendicitis and the two doctors hovering over me inveigh against the evils of obesity, I still merely smile. They are both of them one hundred-and-forty-one pounders.

If I had been a thin man, well I know that by this time my appendix would be an exhibit in a glass jar, and probably for the rest of my life I would be suffering the discomfort of wearing an abdominal belt, after what they considered a "successful" operation. As it is, the surgeons dubiously prod the rolls of fat and unable to decide which roll it is that hides the complaining appendix, talk in learned whispers about my being a "bad operative risk", and finally decide to wait a while and see what Nature will do, — and Old Nature, being a pretty good sort of a physician, quickly heals the ailing appendix and leaves me none the worse off except for a lot of doctor bills.

The truth of the matter is, I have known a lot of fat men who tried to reduce. Most of them are dead now.

Of the other fat men of my acquaintance

who have succeeded in reducing and have managed to escape the death penalty, most of them seem somehow to have had their genial characters entirely transformed, causing me to wonder if they get as much joy out of life as they did when they were fat. There for instance is my friend Sam Blythe, once a rotund jester, wherever he went the center of a laughing circle listening to his funny stories, forever seeing the funny side of life. He has reduced now or has been reduced to a mere health hypochondriac, thinking more of things not to eat than of witty things to say, and forever worrying about his own and the nation's waist line. There is my friend Irv Cobb, once as gallant and merry a trencherman as ever one sat down with, frightened now by this reducing propaganda into taking off a lot of weight, and sobbing mournfully through a whole book about it. There, too, is that merry fat man, Don Marquis, actually scared by the reductionists into eating spinach.

SPINACH! Ugh!

Even the doctors' grave statements about

the necessity of reducing, thus far have failed to alarm me. Whenever a doctor does not know exactly what it is that ails a patient — and that is about ninety per cent. of the time — invariably he falls back on the patter that they teach all young medicos in the primer class. Says he, looking wise:

"You're quite a bit over weight. The first thing for you to do is to take off a few pounds by diet and exercise."

Bread pills — that is all it is.

Everybody knows, even a doctor, that if you can get a patient's mind off his troubles, if you can get him to thinking less about himself, he'll be far better off. That's the real reason why the doctors try to divert the patient's mind; why they try to divert his attention to playing golf and eating spinach. They know that he will have less time then to think about his headaches and backaches, and once people quit thinking about their ailments, they have a way of vanishing, doctor or no doctor.

As a matter of fact, no physician really

believes that fat [redacted] tries to make it out to be. Look at the facts for yourself. Consider all the pains they take to fatten up the babies and keep them that way. And when a doctor discovers that a patient has tuberculosis what is the first thing he invariably does? Starts to fatten him up, in order that he may have more resistance to oppose to the disease.

Fat is nature's reserve, stored up against the time when you will need it. So when your waist line begins to increase, don't worry about it. Just be thankful that you are a normal person, and that old Dame Nature is taking good care of you.

But despite my belief in fat, many years of unsolicited advice have made me, willy-nilly, an authority on reducing. There are only three ways by which it can be done:

First: By medicines.

Second: By dieting.

Third: By exercise.

And of all the foolish people who try to reduce, those who attempt to take off

the necessity of reducing the most foolish. Any medicine powerful enough to take off fat is sure to derange the entire system, and more than likely leave you an invalid for the rest of your life. As for these advertised patent medicines that "take off ten pounds in twenty days", leave them strictly alone. You can make up your mind to one of two things, and generally to both of them. Either the statement is a lie, or the medicine is too dangerous to monkey with.

So cutting out the patent medicines and the quack doctors, there are two legitimate ways left, — diet and exercise.

The trouble with the diet sharps is that they foolishly attempt to standardize the whole human race, — something that even its Creator has never attempted. They reduce living to long tables of proteids, carbohydrates, and fats, and then attempt to fit everybody to it, making no allowances whatever for the idiosyncracies of the individual.

Yet each person in the world is absolutely different from every other person. Take a

bunch of growing boys in a boarding school, feed them exactly the same diet. Some of them will get fat on it and others will not. Some people are naturally meat eaters, and others get along very well with only a vegetable diet. There are persons with a predisposition to fat, and others whom nothing in the world could fatten up. There are persons who cannot digest milk, and others who cannot eat strawberries.

But none of these things your ardent dietician takes into account. He looks at his tables — proteids, carbohydrates, and fats — measures your height, asks your age, and learnedly says:

"To be healthy you should eat 64 proteids, 68 carbohydrates, and 424 fats."

Oh, shucks!

There are a lot of things about the human system to be taken account of besides the digestive tract. A blonde giant descended from the Nordic stock, with an inheritance of centuries of meat eaters behind him cannot be weighed in the same diet scale as a squat brunette from South-

ern Europe. Some day perhaps, when the scientists have studied deeper into the effects of heredity on diet, when they have succeeded in psychoanalyzing food likes and dislikes, when they have really found out what all the little glands in the body are for, they may be able to lay down scientific laws of diet for each individual, but the time is not yet.

Mr. Jones, of the fat Jones family, by strict dieting may be temporarily reduced in weight, but not one year will be added to his allotted span of life, and the chances are he will find life far drearier and less enjoyable than if he had never dieted. And the minute he quits his limited schedule of proteids, carbohydrates, and fats, back will come all the adiposity that nature and his ancestry intended him to have.

Nor will exercise avail a man whom Nature intended to be fat. It is true that by violent muscular movements, by handball and tennis, he may temporarily keep down his weight, but the minute he stops his exercising, back comes all his adipose

tissue, generally in greater quantities than ever before.

And in exercise lie unsuspected perils, even greater than those that come from too big a waist line. When a man has reached middle age without ever having exercised and suddenly takes up gymnasium work or golf, he is all too apt to overdo. Heart and lungs and other organs, long accustomed to sedentary habit of life, all at once called upon to do strenuous duty, cannot stand the strain.

Hardly a week passes that I do not read of some middle-aged man dropping dead on the golf course.

I know what ailed them. Some one had persuaded them that they ought to reduce.

CHAPTER FIVE

HOW TO GET FAT

It is easy for any one to perceive that the requirements of the community may make certain just demands on the individual. No one will dispute that the law has a right to step in when a music-loving soul persists in playing jazz records at three o'clock in the morning. It seems perfectly reasonable that boys who go swimming in the fountain in the public square should be made to don bathing suits. No one complains of the laws regulating the speed of automobiles. In a strongly religious community where everybody goes to church on Sunday morning, it is even conceivable that the neighbors might reasonably object to the conduct of a godless neighbor who built chicken coops on Sunday morning.

But surely no one can dispute in these free and independent United States that a man's weight is strictly his own business.

Yet all my obese life, like all other men, I have been constantly confronted, affronted, and — were I not shamelessly fat — I might even say annoyed by the sight of stacks of books, scores of pamphlets, and reams of newspaper and magazine articles and advertisements, offering unsolicited advice on "How to Get Thin." Never that I can recall have I seen anything printed or published on "How to Get Fat."

No one can, however, dispute that among the hundred odd millions of Americans there are thousands on thousands whose appearance would be greatly improved, whose health would be bettered, and whose dispositions would be softened by the addition of a few pounds. From my point of view, in fact — from the comfortable citadel of two hundred and fifty pounds — and backing my opinion with a pleasant half-century's experience of being a fat man, the world would be a much happier place to live in if every one of its adult inhabitants weighed at least twenty-five or fifty pounds more.

diculous, did I hear some thin person claim!

Stop and think a minute. Get out your pencil and paper and make a list of the people who do annoying things, — the persons who make your life uncomfortable.

Answer these questions honestly:

Was the landlord who raised your rent thin or fat?

What was the avoirdupois of the village Shylock who foreclosed the mortgage and turned the widow and orphans out to starve? Can you picture him as anything but a thin-lipped, thin-blooded, thin-bodied creature?

What is the average weight of the vamps who lure husbands from their happy homes? Did you honestly ever know of a married man eloping with a fat girl?

Which cook was it that complained the loudest when you got home late to dinner, — the fat one or the thin one?

When you have been speeding in your flivver, which would you rather be stopped by, — a fat cop or a thin one?

Would you rather work for a corpulent employer or for a thin, scrawny one?

If in the middle of the vacation season you are trying to get Pullman accommodations and there are none to be had, from which railroad clerk will you obtain the most satisfaction, — a fat smiling Bob or a slim Jim?

There isn't any doubt about it whatever. Every person with the truth in their soul will readily admit that the vast majority of human pests are under weight. Look at the next life insurance agent who comes into your office to bother you.

Fat brings happiness and contentment to the person who has it, and being happy himself he spreads the contagion to others. In fact, if the whole world a few years ago could only have got fattened up a bit, there would be no need now for disarmament meetings and Genoa conferences. There just naturally would not have been any World War, for it's about the hardest job there is to get a fat man into a fight.

Therefore, in making an attempt to formulate rules for getting fat, the feeling

ıes to me that I am doing signal service to my fellow men. I realize that it is a difficult task, much more difficult than advising people how to get thin. Any one can get thin. Quit eating and you can always reduce. Exercise violently and you will always lose weight. Getting fat is a vastly different matter. That requires brains. To get fat you have to learn how to get the most out of life.

Yet it can be done. Any one who will faithfully follow the five simple rules laid down here will soon find that he is adding to his weight.

First: Cultivate a fat disposition.

Make up your mind that nothing that can happen is worth your worrying about. Worry accomplishes nothing. If you can help a thing, why worry about it? If you can't help it, why worry about it? And at any rate, fifty years from now it will make absolutely no difference. The things that you worry about never happen.

Don't wear yourself out trying to accomplish things. Alexander set out to conquer the world, and where is he now?

Nothing but a bad memory. There are lots of people who wear themselves out trying to get rich, and when they finally succeed their wives become unhappy social climbers, they have all sorts of servant trouble, and their children turn out badly. Analyze your ambitions and make sure they are worth while; be confident first that when they are ultimately attained they will bring happiness.

Take each day as it comes, and do your best with every matter that comes up, and let it go at that. If when evening comes you can look at yourself in the mirror and smilingly say, "Well, I have done the best I could," you are in a fair way to put on weight rapidly.

Second: Disregard other people's opinions and actions.

When people find themselves troubled, it nearly always comes from their relations with others, from mean or unjust things that they have said and done. Yet in a fat man's philosophy these things are of little account.

People do things, mean things or kind

things, because it is their nature to do them. A thousand causes combine to make them what they are: the stock from which they are descended, the shape of their heads, the condition of their glands, the state of their teeth, and their tummies. If some one goes about saying mean things about you, what of it? Amuse yourself by making a study of him. Try to find out what it is that makes him act that way, and try to forecast the next mean thing he will do. And always remember that what he does will hurt him far more than it hurts you.

Third: Let your mind govern you.

Always remember this: It is not what happens that counts. It is what you think about what happens. You may get up in the morning when you had a picnic planned, and find it raining and sleeting. "What a terrible day!" is your thought. The morning mail brings you unexpected notice that a rich uncle has died suddenly, leaving you one hundred thousand dollars. It is still raining and sleeting, but it has become a wonderful day for you. It's all in your mind.

Whether life is pleasant or unpleasant, all depends on your mental attitude toward it. If you wish to get fat, keep your mind in the right state. Let it be boss of your feelings.

Fourth: Beware of exercise propaganda.

Back in the days when the human race lived in caves and trees, when it had to fight saber-toothed tigers and giant sloths every day to keep alive, there was undoubtedly a great necessity for exercise, and everybody got plenty of it.

But for thousands and thousands of years, as civilization has progressed, our habits of life have changed. The successful man of today isn't the man who is strong enough to kill wild animals. He is the man who has cultivated his mind in some special direction by intensive effort. It stands to reason that a young man who devotes hours each day to exercise, to tennis, to golf, to baseball, to rowing, is using time that must be deducted from his mental activities. Most of the American men who get to the top spent very little time in their youth following the lead of the exercise propagandists.

When middle age comes, exercise, to a man unaccustomed to it, is not only silly, but dangerous. The human body is an intricate machine that adapts itself to its owner's habits. When a man who has spent his life at a desk suddenly goes in for dumb-bell swinging, or tennis or golf, his heart muscles, softened by his sedentary life, are apt to give out.

Remember this: Practically every form of exercise has been commercialized. There are people who make money out of every kind of exercise, and they are every one of them active propagandists for exercise.

Get enough sunlight and fresh air, and you need not worry about exercising, especially if you wish to put on weight. Make a study of some retired horse. After a life of violent exercise, he retires to a peaceful pasture and lives to a ripe, contented old age.

Fifth: Quit worrying about your diet.

For a great many years — certainly thousands; more than likely several millions of years — our ancestors have been experimenting with food values and food com-

binations. The meals we eat to-day are the summing up of what they have learned. There are excellent dietetic reasons — the reasons of human experience — for eating ham with eggs, oil with salad, potatoes with meat, and butter with bread.

When the doctor tries to put you on a diet, remember that medicine is far from being an exact science. Diagnosis is still largely a guess and most physicians are merely experimenters. The day is still distant when any doctor can lay down a food regimen adapted to each individual. Each of us has an aptitude for certain foods, and an unpleasant reaction toward others. Some people cannot eat strawberries, and others and lobster always disagree. If ten doctors made a life study of one individual, they might perhaps map out a food list for him, but even then they would be apt to disagree.

There are some diabetic specialists who insist on their patients eating potatoes, and others who forbid them entirely. One school of diet specialists forbids drinking water with meals and another tribe insists on it.

Nature after all has had millions of years more of experience than all the doctors combined. Nature's guide as to what you should eat is your appetite. If you wish to get fat, eat what your appetite demands, and let the diet specialists alone.



EACH OF US HAS AN APTITUDE FOR CERTAIN FOODS, AND AN UNPLEASANT REACTION TOWARD OTHERS.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

CHAPTER SIX

ADMITTING THE DRAWBACKS

In the interest of fairness, however, it must be confessed that there are some little inconveniences about being fat. It might be easier to tie one's shoes in the morning without a paunch. Occasionally a fat man, visiting friends over the week-end, will find himself wedged into a bathtub that some slim person designed. On humid summer days, even a fat man may be goaded into a sharp retort when the forty-ninth person gloatingly says: "This is the kind of a day that gets you fellows."

It may be a bit annoying when in a shop window I discover a fancy waistcoat that appeals to me, and entering I discover that they do not carry it in a large size. I see a new, non-wiltable soft collar advertised, and decide that it is just the thing for my eighteen-inch neck, and I learn at the collar counter that these collars run only to size

seventeen. My friends proudly exhibit wonderful bargains in winter overcoats, but I know by experience it is no use for me to try to get one. Always the limit of bargains is size forty-four, and I know I need a fifty-two. I decide that I would look well in a high wing collar with evening clothes. The clerk takes a quick look at my triple chin and bring out the lowest collar in stock.

And all fat men have a secret obsession, predilection, heartfelt desire, — call it what you will. It is nothing more nor less than to see themselves dressed in a large-checked light gray suit. Time and again I have tried to buy one, but thus far unsuccessfully. Neither my wife nor my tailor will permit it. When, in a moment of unusual daring, I selected some samples of the sort of goods I had my heart set upon and took them home, my wife threw up her hands and shrieked with laughter.

"You know you can't wear checks like that," she insisted. "A suit of that material would make you look like a disarmed battleship."

Firmly resolved to have my own way about it for once in my life, against her protests, I visited the tailor shop the next morning, and, resolutely producing the loudest sample, began my little speech:

"I want a suit — "

Tactfully but firmly the tailor interrupted me. "Here's just the very thing for you — a piece of blue serge that came in this morning, neat but not showy, just right for a middle-aged man of your figure."

"My figure!" I surrender.

Yet I still have hope. Some day I am going to find a fat, middle-aged tailor who has never married, a tailor with an independent spirit and an understanding soul, and then — provided my wife is off on a visit to her mother — I shall have a large-checked light gray suit.

"But," protests a fat spinster of my acquaintance, "it is all right for men to be fat, but how about us. You men have put the 'fat' in fatality for us. Men simply will not marry a fat girl."

It isn't the men's fault. It is one more pernicious result to be laid at the door of

the reducing propaganda. That and fashion are responsible for the fat girls' plight. Present-day fashions here in America have decreed in favor of the slim figure, but there is always hope. Fashion is constantly changing. There are certain sections of Africa where the fattest girls are looked upon as the most desirable brides. If the corpulent American women and girls will only all get together in an energetic movement to make fat fashionable, who knows but that their day may speedily come, and the spinster shelves then will be lined with perfect thirty-sixes.

Taking it all in all, the annoyances that fat people suffer from being fat are trifling. There is always the consolation, if one's condition becomes unbearable, that any fat person can get thin if he wants to. Most fat people, however, prefer to stay fat, and in their moments of despondency they are apt to comfort themselves by recalling the notable roster of the great accomplishers, and noting how many of them were fat.

Who have been the most famous leaders

of nations? Caesar, Cromwell, Napoleon, Bismarck — all of them fat men.

Who are the most celebrated men of letters? Shakespeare, Balzac, Johnson, Swift, Addison, Steele, Chesterton, — all fat men.

Who are among the most celebrated in the world of music to-day? Matzenauer, Tetrazzini, Emmy Destinn, Victor Herbert, — so many of the famous musical people are ladies, we'll call them plump and let it go at that.

Corpulence really seems to go with success in public life. Everyone knows what is meant by an "aldermanic paunch." It is unnecessary to explain it. Most mayors, most senators, and quite a number of the Presidents and Judges of the Supreme Court have been fat men, while the rank and file of American political life includes a horde of "Big Jims" and "Big Toms."

In business life the leaders often are fat men. When a business play is being staged and there is wanted an actor to play the rôle of a prosperous banker, do they ever pick a thin one? Practically all the men

1989767

of big affairs, the captains of industry, the financial leaders, the railroad builders, are men like Charles M. Schwab, big, full-muscled, two-hundred-pounders. It isn't the men who are always hustling around on their feet who do the most useful work in the world. It's the sitters, the men who use their brains, who are the producers.

Summing it up, the best proof that a fat man gets the most out of life lies in the fact that in every state in the Union there are Fat Men's Clubs, voluntary associations of men who are frankly fat, and proud of it. Who ever heard of a Thin Men's Club? Who would want to belong to it if there were one? Fat Men's Clubs get together and have wonderful times, but if a lot of thin men should meet, when they weren't querulous, they would be sure to be fighting, or perhaps they might even bore each other telling how good they were at golf. But if any fat men's club anywhere should read this little book and elect me to membership, I would at once proudly accept. I would know at once it would be a mighty nice club.





